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1.1 Skepticism and Psychological Constitution

Our everyday experiences sometimes strike us as strange, bewildering, absurd, dreamlike, or surreal, and quite a few of us feel upset when we cannot find answers to the puzzles that arise from such experiences. The inability to find answers may be more unsettling to those who are trained or engaged in systematic reflection and who have the impression that there is something deeply baffling about the world, its existence, or the human mind. Such an epistemic failure may give rise to a feeling of existential angst and not merely to theoretical frustration. Existential angst affects a person's life more widely, shaping the manner in which he experiences his daily interactions with others and the world. A philosopher or a scientist may experience frustration on account of his failure to answer certain philosophical or scientific questions, without such a feeling extending to his life outside the study, the seminar room, the conference hall, or the laboratory. For that kind of failure does not necessarily have an impact on the manner in which he experiences life as a whole. Thus again, theoretical frustration can engender existential angst when one takes the problems addressed in the above contexts to directly bear upon the way